in the other country and representatives of one country assigned to International organizations located in the other country.

(d) Similar agreements are being contemplated with Brunei, Chile, France, Myanmar, Russia, Tajikistan, Thailand and Uzbekistan.

Ill treatment with Indians in Malaysia

3014. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI: SHRI R.P. GOENKA: SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: SHRI DATTA MEGHE: SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: SHRI SURENDRA LATH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(f) whether it is a fact that recently, some 270 Indian IT. professionals, who are working in Malaysia for Indian or Malaysian companies on valid visas, were arrested, beaten up and their passports and visas were defaced and other indignities were inflicted on them by the Malaysian authorities;

(g) if so; the details thereof;

(a) the steps taken for safety and self-respect of the Indian professionals working in Malaysia; and

(b) the details of the long term steps contemplated, if any, to review the bilateral arrangements with Malaysia for cooperation in various fields?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) and (b) On March 9, 2003,195 Indian IT. professionals were detained by the Malaysian police for questioning about their visa status. The visa page on some of the passports were damaged in the process.

(c) and (d) Government took up the matter strongly with Malaysian authorities that led to the immediate release of all but 3 deported since for overstay. Malaysian leaders including Acting Prime Minister have expressed regret and apologized over the incident. The Malaysian government has also conveyed that they would not like this incident to mar the tempo of our multi-faceted bilateral relations.

Indian workers in Gulf Countries

† 3015. SHRI BASHISTHA NARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(c) the number of workers of Indian origin who went to the gulf countries till 2000 for various non-technical jobs and the number of workers out of them who have returned, so far;

(d) the number of such workers in these countries who are undergoing punishment or are being prosecuted as per law of the land; and

(e) what arrangements would be made to bring these wretched workers back by providing them suitable assistance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) As per information received from Ministry of Labour, 32,10,610 Indian workers went to countries in the Gulf between 1991 and 2000 for employment. Data on returnees is not available since workers who return do not inform any Government agency about their return.

(f) There are 7176 Indian workers undergoing imprisonment or are being prosecuted in the Gulf countries.

(g) Indian Missions ensure that there is no miscarriage of justice in respect of these cases. Efforts are also made to ensure speedy trial.

Damage control measures on Malaysian crisis

3016. SHRI K,B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what diplomatic damage control measures have been taken by

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.